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UNCLAS DHAKA 002439

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SUBJECT: WTO SERVICES NEGOTIATIONS - BANGLADESH

REF: STATE 81619

1. Econoff delivered reftel points May 25 to Naziruddin Ahmed, Director General, WTO Cell, Ministry of Commerce. The DG said Bangladesh is working with the WTO and a private contractor arranged for by the WTO to conduct a study of the Bangladesh services sector, which will be used to inform policy-makers decisions on a services offer. Individual consultants are still being identified and the DG expects it will be several months before the study is completed. Only then will the BDG prepare its services offer.

2. DG Ahmed confirmed BDG commitment to make an offer. He acknowledged that opening up Bangladesh's service sector would provide economic benefits for the country. That said, he implied Bangladesh would reserve some sectors deemed important, based on the result of the sectoral study.

THOMAS